

Fecialis Gemitus et Tubae secundae Clangor!

OR, A

M I R R O R

FOR

SABBATH-BREAKERS.

BEING

A FRIENDLY EXPOSTULATION with
the INHABITANTS of GLASGOW, on
occasion of turning the SABBATH into
a *Post-day*, which commenced the 27th
of April, 1760.

In Which

The SINFULNESS thereof is shewn; the DIVINE DIS-
PLEASURE against *Sabbath Profanation* evinced;
the PLEAS of the *Promoters* obviated; with a
CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

Tempus instat puniendi legis adversarios. —

Quònam aberis usque, dum pios tyrannide

Premitt arrogantèr impius?

O si scelestum vergat in caput scelus,

Suisque pereat artibus! BUCHAN. Psal. cxix. 126. 2. 2.

JER. ix. 9. *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not
my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*

G L A S G O W:

Printed for and sold by R. SMITH, at the sign of the
Gilt-Bible, opposite to the New-Church, Salt-
mercat, 1760.



1573/693

MIRROR for SABBATH BREAKERS.

CITIZENS,

THERE is scarce any thing wherein the depravity of man is more evinced, than by his ingratitude to his bountiful Benefactor: and what exhibits this in a still more striking light, is, that the sense of honour and gratitude is ordinarily expressed in a more lively manner to the creature, than to the Creator. Single acts of beneficence, from men, like ourselves, generally meet with more kindly returns, than innumerable instances of good-will from the most bountiful Creator. This ingrateful disposition seems not only to appertain to individuals, but to the species: and hence it comes to pass, that we see not only single persons, whom providence has largely smiled upon, grow more remiss in religious duties, and, Jeshurun-like, when they *wax fat, kick against God*; but even whole nations and cities stand justly charged with this sin, that as they advance in opulence and magnificence, they increase in unthankfulness and ingratitude; let Israel and Judah witness, as nations; and Tyre and Sodom, as cities.—But, we need not ransack the annals of time, to illustrate a truth of which so many instances may be given. Britain, as a nation; and Glasgow, as a city, give us recent instances of this heinous sin of ingratitude. If we view ourselves as a *nation*, how many evidences might be adduced! Scarce a nation under heaven have had such honours conferred; enjoyed such privileges, civil and religious; experienced so many deliverances, spiritual and temporal;

poral; possessed such favours, special and common, as we have*: yet what returns of gratitude have arisen from all these instances of kindness? Have we *given unto the Lord the glory due unto his name?* Have we offered *him the praise of thanksgiving?* and *paid unto him our vows?* Is not infidelity, immorality, and every abomination taking place?—If we consider this place, in particular, as a *city*, what instances of ingratitude are to be found in it? If we consider the means of grace we enjoy; the success and prosperity in trade we have met with; the riches and opulence we are possessed of, we may justly say, there are few cities can compete with us. But how have we requit the Most High for all this? Is not profanity, impiety, and every evil work to be found in our skirts? Have not all ranks, high and low, corrupted their ways? And have we not now, at last, fallen upon a method, by bringing in the Post, upon the Sabbath morning, and sending him off at night, to banish religion from amongst us, both in principle and practice? A scheme every way dishonouring to God, injurious to his holy law, detrimental to the interests of religion, and pregnant with the most direful effects. A scheme so pernicious to the souls of men, that Satan himself, with all his emissaries, could not have contrived a more effectual one, to complete our ruin and destruction.

Brethren, you will no doubt, remember, that very gradual steps have been taken to introduce this scheme. The usual course of the Post was to arrive

* Our ingratitude might be easily expiated upon, and shown to be monstrously aggravated at this time: if we reflect, in-general, on the success of our arms by sea and land; the many conquests we have made, and how our enemies have been every where baffled in their attempts: and in particular, if we remember how the Lord protected and delivered us when we were not only threatened with an invasion from our enemies, but our coasts actually infested, may we not well say, *We soon forgot his mighty works?*

here on Monday morning about nine o'clock ; but after the last rebellion 1745, there was influence used [some say, by the publishers of the news-papers in this place,] to get the Glasgow mail to arrive about *three or four* on Monday morning, soon thereafter at *eleven* on Sabbath night, and then, probably by the concurrence of some others, at *eight* on Sabbath evening. When the Post came in at this hour last mentioned, the news papers were indeed given out, but no letters, till about two years ago, when they were delivered to them who sent for them, at the reward of a penny each, over and above the postage. About twelve months hence, a bold push was made to get the Post in upon the Sabbath morning at nine o'clock. This gradual method, together with exacting, for a time, something more than the neat postage, shews us the illegality of the practice. However, there was such opposition made to it, such general discontent shewed at it, and the illegality thereof so clearly evinced, both from the word of God, and the standing laws of the realm, that it was judged expedient to lay it aside at that time, lest the incensed populace should have been influenced, from the practice of godly Nehemiah, chap. xiii. 15,—22. to *have laid hands upon him, and expelled him from the city.*

This pernicious scheme hath been secretly conducted, and privately solicited for, since that time ; and scarce ever heard of till it actually took place, on Sabbath the 27th of April last, when the Post really came in on Sabbath morning, the Post-office set open, letters and news papers delivered out, returns made to them at night, and the Post sent off. Astonishing profanity ! *Tell it not in Gath, etc.*

This scheme, and the promoters of it, have been derided and lampoon'd : as to the propriety of this way of writing ; or whether this be a proper subject to exercise it on or not, we shall not here determine : but as the subject is of the utmost importance, we think

think it merits to be gravely treated ; and it is in this light we shall essay it at present. And in doing so, we shall attempt, (1.) To shew the *sinfulness* of it. (2.) Evince the *divine displeasure* at *Sabbath profanation*. (3.) Obviate the *pleas* of the promoters for it. (4.) Conclude the whole with an *expostulatory address*.

I. We are to attempt to shew the **SINFULNESS** of this scheme of turning the Sabbath into a *Post-day*. And this we shall essay, in the following particulars.

1. It is sinful, as it is contrary to *the express letter of the law of God*, Exod. xx. 8,—11. *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy*, etc. As the fourth commandment is a moral precept, so it is perpetually obligatory to the end of time. To condemn the law of an earthly sovereign is deemed very criminal : but how much more criminal is it, to trample upon the laws of him who is the sovereign law-giver of heaven and earth? And is not the doing so a saying, upon the matter, *Who is the Lord that we should obey him?*

2. It is sinful, as it is contrary to *many standing laws of the realm*, for the *due observation of the Sabbath*, and *against profaneness*. Which laws were clearly pointed out in pamphlets published on this subject last year, to which we refer you*.—It is the happiness of this realm, above many others, to have many good laws enacted, both for the preservation of religion, and maintaining the rights and liberties of the subjects, and against all profanity and immorality. And therefore this scheme must be highly sinful, as it hath not so much as civil authority to countenance it. That there is no civil sanction to countenance this iniquitous practice, is what the chief promoters of this scheme seem to confess : for, if there were any, why hath it been so long dormant? Why any papers of subscription required

* See a pamphlet, intitled, the laws of God, and the laws of the realm, for the observation of the Sabbath, &c.

from those who want their letters delivered on the Sabbath? But, tho' there were any such iniquitous law [but it is ground of thankfulness there is none, nor can the keenest promoters shew any such law] we ought to pay no regard to it, while it is repugnant to the divine law; for, in that case, *we ought rather to obey God than man.*

3. It is highly sinful, as it is an *alienating some part of that sacred day*, to the *managing our secular employments*, by receiving, reading, and writing letters, which ought to be wholly employed in the religious service of God. And if we are to do NO work on the Sabbath, how unaccountable must it be for those who employ a third part, others a fourth; some the half, others the whole of that holy day in secular affairs? If they escaped not who despised Moses' law; how can we expect to escape that have the superadded tye of Christ's finishing the work of redemption to commemorate, seeing, on this account, it is called, *The Lord's day?*

4. The sinfulness of this scheme may be evinced, from its having a tendency not only to bring the Lord's day into disrepute, but also *to pour contempt upon the holy ordinances, and sacred institutions of God*; and to fill the taverns and coffee-houses with crouds of people, to read news papers, and talk of public matters, even in time of public ordinances: and thereby thinning his tabernacles, which *he delights in*; and despising his ordinances, which *he is zealous for*. And when this is the case, may not this inscription be written upon all the churches, ICHABOD, *The glory is departed?*

5. It is sinful, as it hath a tendency to *exterminate all religious principles from the minds of men*, and rub off any religious impressions made by attending upon ordinances, even tho' the Post-office should not be opened till five o'clock at night; which will scarcely be allowed, if this practice is permitted to remain
amongst

amongst us, in regard the principal traffic of the city is carried on by letters; it will soon be pled, that three hours time is too short a space to answer their letters. And it is the more likely to be so, as it is well known, the Post-days are the throngest days of business. Hath not this scheme then a native tendency, not only to fill our minds with unbelieving thoughts of God, so as to hinder him from *doing many mighty works among us*, in love and mercy; but also to provoke him to *depart out of our coasts altogether*?—And then, *Wo unto you*, says he, *if I depart from you!*

6. This scheme may be looked upon as highly sinful because it hath a native tendency to *sear the conscience in a course of sin*; and thereby pave the way to, and be introductory of many other degrees of Sabbath profanation. And who knows, but in process of time, it may be pled necessary to open ware-houses and shops, to answer commissions? And even mechanics employed to forward business on that holy day? *Ah! sinful people.*

7. It is sinful, as it occasions *several horses to ride, and men to be employed unnecessarily*; we say, unnecessarily, in regard, there is no valuable end gained by it: we have no more Post-days by it; for, since the Post came in, and went away on the Sabbath, there is one day in the week, on which he used to ride, that he must be unemployed. And can such an unaccountable profanation of that holy day, be viewed in any other light, than a pouring the greatest contempt upon all religion, both in principle and practice, and a bold stroke at all practical godliness? *In it thou shalt not do any work,—neither thy MAN-SERVANT,—nor thy CATTLE.*

8. It is unaccountably sinful to dispense with the binding obligation of this moral precept, as it hath a tendency, by the same parity of reason, to *bring the other moral precepts of the law of God into disrepute*; and

and influence others to call in question the *whole moral law*, or ten commandments: for all the commands are of the same antiquity; delivered by the same Author; have equal place in the decalogue; have the same honour of being spoken and written on tables of stone by God; and have the like dignity conferred on them of being placed in the ark of the covenant. *Shall we break the commandment and prosper?* And if kings are to adhere to, and *not turn aside from the commandment*, (Deut. xvii. 20.) how incongruous is it for *petty subjects* to infringe them? — *He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.*

9. This scheme is sinful, as it is *pregnant with many other sins* and abominations. Sabbath profanation never comes alone, but hath many other iniquities that are concomitants or attendants thereof: swearing, drunkenness, theft, idleness, and all manner of uncleanness generally accompany it. And hence it is, that scarce any who have been driven on, from one course of wickedness to another, till it terminated in an untimely end, but have acknowledged that the breach of God's holy law, and profaning the Sabbath was introductory to their ruin.

10. It is sinful, as it will undoubtedly *intail ruin upon the rising generation*, who will be introduced into the world with, trained up in, and inured to Sabbath profanation; which will inevitably expose them to the displeasure of heaven, and finally terminate in their destruction; seeing the Almighty many times visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children. And will we not, on that account, stand justly charged with concealing God's law from our children, and with not faithfully transmitting his truths down to the *generation following*, that they *might praise the Lord, and set their hope in God?* Psal. lxxvii. 1,—7. — *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die*, Isa. xxii. 13.

II. We shall now endeavour to evince the DIVINE DISPLEASURE at Sabbath profanation; by presenting a few

a few instances of the judgments and desolations that Sabbath profanation hath brought upon nations and places.

1. The divine displeasure at Sabbath profanation is evident, from its being made a *capital crime*, and *capitally punished*: that it is a *capital crime*, is evident from *Exod. xxxi. 12,--17*; where it is declared, that *every one that defileth the Sabbath, shall surely be put to death: and whosoever doth any work therein, [but the works, of piety and mercy,] shall be cut off from amongst the people, he shall surely be put to death.* And that it was *capitally punished*, is clear from *Numb. xv. 32,—36.* where we read of one *stoned to death, by all the congregation, for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day.* Is not contempt and profanation of the Sabbath an iniquity to be punished by the judges?

2. The Divine displeasure against Sabbath-breakers, is further evident, in regard it is one of the sins charged upon Israel, as the procuring cause of their being *led captive to Babylon*, and many of their *carcasses falling in the wilderness*, *Ezek. xx. 12, 13, 21.* and *xxi. 8.* and *15.* compared. *I gave them my Sabbaths, but my Sabbaths they greatly polluted and profaned; then I said, I will scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them in the countries, and pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them.*

3. The divine displeasure against profaning the Sabbath is abundantly evinced by the ruin and destruction it brought upon Jerusalem, *Jer. xvii. 15, 22. 27.* Thus saith the Lord, *take heed to yourselves, and bear no burdens on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it into the gates of Jerusalem, neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day; neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers.—But if you will not hearken to me to hallow the Sabbath-day,—then will I kindle*

a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched. This was literally accomplished, when Jerusalem was besieged, and laid in ashes. *What was written aforetime, was written for our learning. And because I will do these things unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, Amos iv. 12.*

To set this matter still in a clearer light, we might cite many instances of the Almighty's displeasure at Sabbath profanation, recorded in the writings of pious and judicious authors. We shall select a few of many.—Dr BEARD, in his *theatre of God's judgments* p. 419, 420. informs us, That *Stratford*, upon *Avon*, was twice, on the same day twelve month, (being the Lord's day,) almost consumed with fire; chiefly for profaning the Lord's day. And that *Feverton*, in *Devonshire*, (being often told that God would bring some heavy, judgment on the town for their horrible profanation of the Lord's day,) was, *Annis* 1598, and 1612, wholly consumed with fire, except the church, the court house, and a few poor peoples dwellings. —Dr TWISS, on the *Sabbath*, acquaints us, that at *London*, Jan. 13th, 1583. a great multitude of profane people being convened on the Sabbath-day, to see the sport of bear-baiting, the Lord, to shew his displeasure at such wickedness, suddenly caused the scaffolds to fall down, by which many were killed, hurt, and bruised. And Anno 1643. fourteen young men playing at foot-ball, on the Lord's day, on the river *Trent*, in time of a great frost, the ice suddenly brake, and they were all drowned.—Mr CLARK, in his *Mirror*, &c. narrates many instances of visible and sudden judgments coming upon Sabbath breakers; such as, some drowned skyting on the Lord's day; others dropt down dead dancing, and some having their houses shops, barns, &c. burnt down for working, dancing, and otherwise regaling themselves in them on the
Lord's

Lord's day. And particularly he relates a story of *Oundle*, in Northampton shire, (which was hainously guilty of profaning the Lord's-day, and slighted all admonitions given them,) that they were terribly frightened, upon a Sabbath evening, after they had retired to their houses from taking their diversions, "by hearing a great noise, and rattling of chains up and down the town, which was accompanied with such a smell and stink of fire and brimstone, that many of their guilty consciences suggested to them, that the devil was come to fetch them away quick into hell;" *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God*, Psal. 9. 17.

We shall now conclude this head, with narrating a remarkable instance in our own country, in the memory of many yet alive. It is well known that *Kirkcaldy* was once the only flourishing seaport town on the east coast of Fife; had a great number of ships employed at sea; used to serve most of the towns on the east-coast with the Dutch commodities: but about 45 years ago, on a Sabbath-day, there suddenly came a great swelling sea, with large shoals of herring: Intimation of this presently came to church, in time of divine service when all concerned in the fishing trade, went immediately to sea with their boats. The pious Mr *Wardrobe* being informed of the occasion of the disturbance, earnestly exhorted the people to remain in their seats; but they would not: he then, in a grave and solemn manner, denounced the judgments of God upon the place; affirming, that from that day forth, their prosperity was at an end. That this hath been remarkably verified, is evident to all that know the place: it is now become quite dead in business, has scarce a single ship at sea, and hardly any thing but poor mechanics in every quarter of it, and few herrings ever taken there since. *Stand in awe, and sin not.*

III. We shall now proceed to *obviate* the PLEAS of the *promoters* of this scheme. And the much boasted of Plea they make use of for this new Regulation, is drawn from an *act of the British Parliament, in the ninth year of Q. Anne 1711*, establishing a general Post-office for all her Majesty's Dominions; wherein it is enacted—"That from, and after the first day of June 1711, no person or persons, shall presume wittingly, willingly, or knowingly, to open, detain, or delay—any letter or packet, after the same is, or shall be delivered into the general, or other Post-offices,—before delivery to the persons to whom they are directed,—under the penalty of 20 L. Sterling."

That all letters should be speedily forwarded, to the persons to whom they are directed, is highly requisite: but is there any thing here to warrant their being forwarded on the Sabbath? and that too in such a manner as to oblige returns to be made to them on the same day? If this was the sense of the act, why hath it been so long unpractised? It is somewhat strange, that, for near these fifty years by-gone, this matter should ly dormant. But that no such thing was intended by the act, is apparent; because the very money that is therein appointed to be paid in to the Exchequer is not to be paid upon any holy-day: if so, then surely no money is to be received or paid upon Sabbath.—That the act 1711, establishing one general Post-office, is not to incroach upon, or enervate any laws made against profanity, or the due observation of the Sabbath, is abundantly evident from the *toleration act*, in the year following 1712; in which act, whatever exceptionable things may be found in it, there is this one thing commendable, that all the good laws, made for the sanctification of the Sabbath, and against profanity, are ratified and confirmed.

Again, It is affirmed, by the promoters of this
scheme,

scheme, that some other places have the Post on Sabbath; and why may not we? and that, among ourselves, there are many other things done on the Sabbath, that are as sinful as receiving and writing letters about business: and though these things have been continued in for many years, and still practised more and more, yet the city is flourishing in trade, and increasing in opulence; which is an evidence, that they are not so offensive in the sight of Heaven, as some would have us believe.—A strange way of reasoning indeed, that the goodness, mercy, and forbearance of God, in deferring to inflict judgments upon a sinning people, should be made use of as an argument to continue and increase in iniquity: this is just the language of profane scorers, of whom the apostle Peter, speaks, who say, *Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning. Because judgment is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the children of men are set in them to do evil.* But remember, that *a thousand years with him are but as one day.* Though judgments may be deferred for a time, yet that does not say that either the sins are approved, or the sinner forgiven: for he may be saying to us as of old, *The cup of the Amorites is not yet full.* It is dangerous to rush upon the bosses of God's buckler, or to transgress any of his precepts. Remember what became of Nadab and Abihu, for *offering strange fire unto the Lord,* Levit. x. 1, 2; and what befell Uzziah for *burning incense unto the Lord,* 2 Chron. xxvi. 18,--21.

IV. Having shewn the sinfulness of this pernicious scheme; evinced the displeasure of Heaven against Sabbath-breakers; and obviated the principal Pleas of the promoters of the scheme; it now remains that we address the inhabitants of the city on this occasion. Providence, by this dispensation, seems to be saying to the inhabitants of this place, as Moses said

to Israel, *Who is upon the Lord's side?* Exod. xxxii. 26. The inhabitants, we think, may be divided into three sorts, *viz.* the promoters of the scheme; the opposers of it; and those that are neutral or indifferent.

1. The *promoters* of the scheme. Permit me to address you, and expostulate the matter a little with you, of whatever rank or denomination you are; however zealous you may be in promoting this matter, we hope you are still within the reach of reason. Well, you have, by your conduct in this matter, given a negative answer to the above question, *viz.* that you will oppose the Lord therein, trample upon his law, and profane his day, by alienating as much of it for your secular affairs as you think proper. What we would say to you, on this occasion, and at this time, is, do you really think the temporal advantage you may imagine you will receive by this change of the post, will sufficiently compensate your loss in incurring the divine displeasure? We can assure you, though your advantage were ten thousand times greater than it will be, it will not compensate for one frown from the almighty: *What will it profit a man, tho' he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?* Therefore, we beseech you, strive not with the Almighty: he will be avenged on his adversaries, and take vengeance upon their inventions; and *wound the hoary scalp of those that go on in their trespasses.* Though you attempt to exalt yourselves above God now, yet the day is coming, that you will be convinced he is above you. Consider this matter, and the premises; *duely consider this, yet that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver,* Psal. l. 22.

2. To you who are the *opposers* of this iniquitous scheme. It is with real pleasure we behold any stirred up, at this juncture, to appear for God, in opposing this impious device: persevere in your laudable

able resolution, in using every habile method, to overturn this scheme, and make it prove abortive. Be not discouraged, in your undertaking, at any opposition you may meet with. What though you should not have the concurrence of those who are in power and authority in the place, on your side? You are embarked in a good cause; and as it is the Lord's, he will befriend it. You have the prayers of those that fear God for your success in this matter; and *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much*, James v. 16, 17. Num. xiv. 19, 20. Call to mind the courage, fortitude, and magnanimity of our predecessors, who *contended earnestly for the faith*; and did it undauntedly even in the presence of crowned heads; witness the boldness of Mr John Knox with Queen Mary. And our Lord himself says, *He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.*

3. We come now to address you who are *indifferent spectators* of this matter. We might have spared addressing you at all on this occasion, and at once thrown you into the first class, *viz.* the *promoters* of the scheme; for it is certain, that they who are not for the Lord, will be against him; and *he will spue the luke warm out of his mouth*: but as we expect better things, at least of some of you, we shall expostulate the matter a little with you. Well then, as Elijah said to Israel, so say we to you, *How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him*, 1 Kings xviii. 21. If, therefore, this scheme, of turning the Lord's day into a day of traffic and commerce, be for God, and his glory, then fall in with it, and promote it; but if it is for the promoting of *Baal's*, or *Satan's* interest [as certainly it is] then oppose it, oppose it with all your might; say not a confederacy with the promoters of this scheme, neither join in affinity with them; lest, if you be found in the enemy's camp, you share of their plagues. Think seriously upon

our Lord's words, *He that is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father which is in heaven.* We may say to you as Mordecai said to Esther, *If you altogether hold your peace, at this time, enlargement and deliverance may come from another place, but you and your father's house shall be destroyed,* Esther iv. 14.

Upon the whole, my brethren, what would our worthy ancestors say, (who firmly adhered to these precious truths, and many of them sealed them with their blood) were they to arise, and behold how many of their degenerate posterity are disposed to give so easily up with them? Would they not be almost disposed to reject us as a spurious offspring, who are a disgrace to their memory? Let all be earnestly beseeched and obtested, as they regard their immortal souls, tender the favour of Heaven, and would not have a hand in provoking the Almighty to blast the prosperity of the city, and bring utter devastation upon the inhabitants, neither to comply with, nor give countenance unto, this wicked contrivance to profane the Lord's day, and overturn all religion in principle and profession. If you should either comply with, or persist in this heaven-daring wickedness, and contemn all admonitions to the contrary, we take this, and all other alarms and warnings that you have got, either from the press or pulpit, to witness against you; yea, we take every letter you receive, every letter you write, every commission you give, every accompt you draw out, every bargain you conclude, on that holy day, to witness against you; nay, we take God, angels, men, and your own consciences, to witness, every one of you against another to witness, that you have got warning. Upon your peril be it. *Your blood will be upon your own head.*

THE SECOND TRUMPET sounded.—*Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?* Amos iii. 6.

THE END.

